

Growth and
Development

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Coastal Town Retains 'Pioneer' Look*Boston Herald, Sunday
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Duxbury Growth Slow, Painless

By JOSEPH T. SULLIVAN

DUXBURY—More than anything else, this scenically-attractive town, situated along the coast 36 miles southeast of Boston, is dedicated to preserving its municipal status quo.

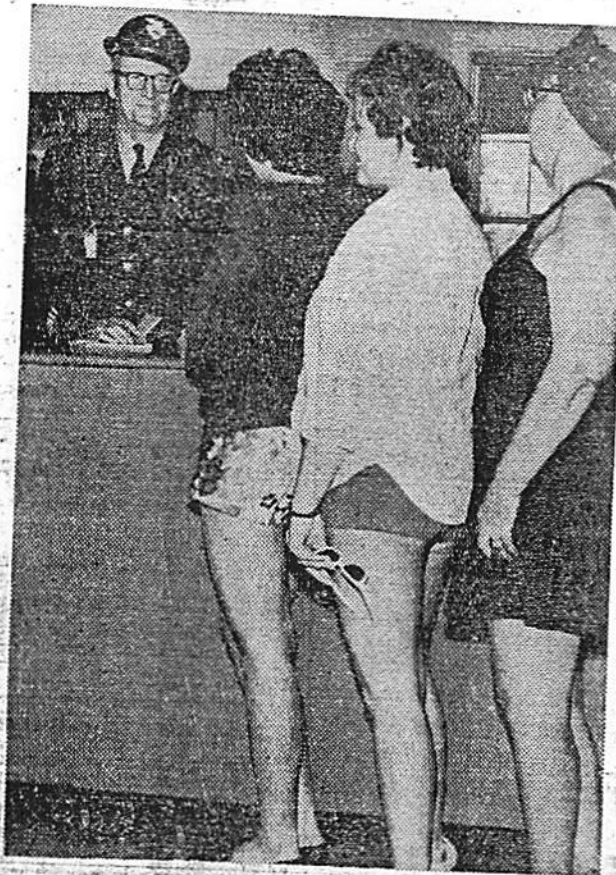
Famed as the home of pioneers Miles Standish and John Alden, it likes the way things are and is doing its best to keep them that way. "We don't want to grow too fast," says Dr. J. Newton Shirley, selectman for the past four years.

Tight Zoning

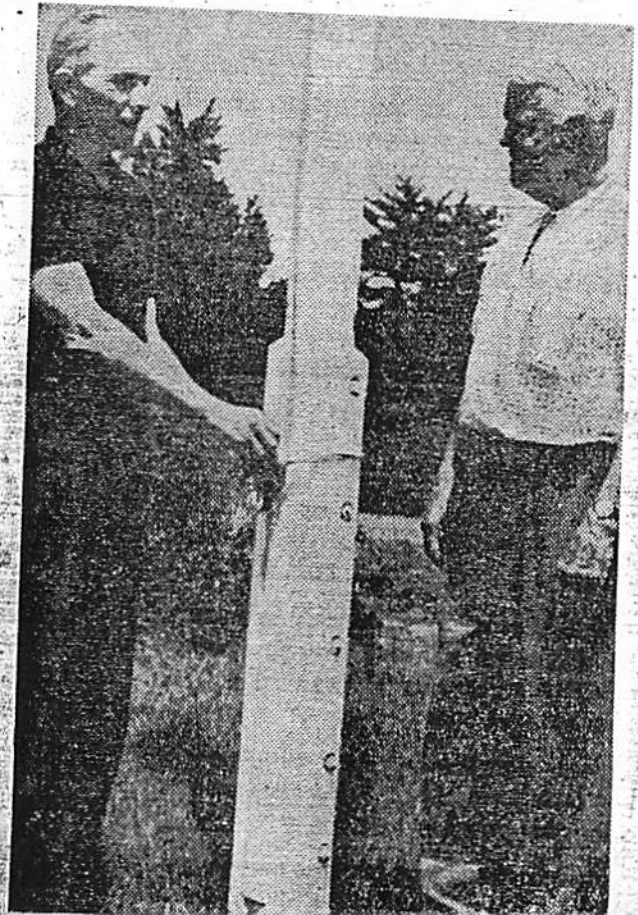
To this end Duxbury has prided itself as a community of tight zoning, demanding subdivision control, and great emphasis on looking now, as much as possible, the way it always looked.

Along picturesque Snug Harbor, for example, you'll find perhaps the only gas station in New England framed by a fence resplendent with rose bushes.

Nearby, "Sweetser's General Store" is a modern supermarket on the inside but on the outside its plain, meticulously pre-



(Herald Photos by Dan Murphy)



BEACH PERMIT TIME — Police Chief Lawrence Doyle issues permits to beachgoers.

served yellow facing bespeaks the days when the town was a major builder of Clipper ships. Across the front of the building hangs the long cherished, splintered black sign — "English-West-India Goods."

Its 31 square miles of countryside, shaded by tall elms of New England's best, has remained preserved for two major reasons.

First, situated as it is, Duxbury was long off the beaten track of "suburbia potential." Secondly, when the developer's bulldozer finally did arrive, the town was ready.

Minimum zoning — the first zoning law went into effect in 1944—is 40,000 square feet with a required 200 feet of frontage and under sub-divisional control a developer must install roads, water mains and hydrants.

The Building Code doesn't allow construction of certain types of pre-fabricated homes and one particular clause even dictates the types of wood to be used in various framing.

Generally Secure

Duxbury was also the first town in the state, says Selectman Shirley, to adopt a by-law forbidding "the filling of wet lands to the point where they could be built on."

And at March Town Meeting, a town conservation commission was established.

As a result, Duxbury feels generally secure that massive home developments will not enter its confines. Presently, the population is estimated at about 4,800—add 5,000 for summer residents—an increase of 1,633 since 1950.

A substantial percentage of the increase has resulted from summer residents converting

than, Linda McNie, and Linda's grandmother, Mrs. Bessie McNie.

their homes for year-round living.

The town also has another factor in its favor. Land is expensive and with the cost of new homes running between \$30,000 and \$50,000 officials display contentment that, in view of town services required, most of the homes pay their own way in tax levies.

The tax rate, incidentally, is \$69 based on state-estimated 31 per cent assessments, with assessors finding themselves in somewhat of a quandary.

As property values continue to soar, they say, they "don't know whether to bring the big

fella down or raise the assessments of the so-called little fellows of the so-called little fella."

11,000 by 1975

As far as the future is concerned, Duxbury planners estimate that the population will reach 11,000 by 1975 and there is much feeling to be found here that come the extension of the Southeast Expressway into town by December 1, that the growth figure might even exceed this.

Time will tell.

In the meantime, Duxbury continues its merry conservative way.



ON THE JOB — Checking over town population figures are, seated, Jane McNeil, left, a clerk, and Miss Katherine Deans, Director of Public Assistance. Standing are Miss Nancy Johnson, clerk, and Sgt. Thomas A. Johnson.

ADJUSTING FLAG at town hall are Selectmen Philip W. Delano, chairman of the board, left, and Dr. J. Newton Shirley.